

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-48 (canceled)

Claim 49 (previously presented): A food coating composition comprising from about 25% to about 70% by weight of the combination of a rice component and a dextrin component in a ratio of rice component to dextrin component of from about 1:2 to about 5:1, said composition being free of corn starch.

Claim 50 (previously presented): The food coating composition of claim 49, wherein the rice component comprises up to about 35% by weight of the solids content of the composition.

Claim 51 (previously presented): The food coating composition of claim 50 further comprising potato starch.

Claim 52 (previously presented): The food coating composition of claim 51, wherein the potato starch is a modified ungelatinized low-amylose content potato starch.

Claim 53 (previously presented): The food coating composition of claim 52 further comprising at least about 1% of at least one leavening agent.

Claim 54 (previously presented): The food coating composition of claim 53 further comprising at least about 0.1% of at least one stabilizing agent.

Claim 55 (previously presented): The food coating composition of claim 49 wherein the ratio of rice component to dextrin component is from about 1:1 to about 5:1.

Applicants : Cheree L.B. Stevens et al.

Appln. No. : 09/778,470

Page 3

Claim 56 (previously presented): The food coating composition of claim 55, wherein the rice component comprises up to about 30% by weight of the solids content of the composition.

Claim 57 (previously presented): The food coating composition of claim 56 which further comprises potato starch.

Claim 58 (previously presented): The food coating composition of claim 57, wherein the potato starch is a modified ungelatinized low-amylose content potato starch.

Claim 59 (previously presented): The food coating composition of claim 58 further comprising at least about 1% of at least one leavening agent.

Claim 60 (previously presented): The food coating composition of claim 59 further comprising at least about 0.1% of at least one stabilizing agent.

Claim 61 (previously presented): The food coating composition of claim 49, wherein the ratio of the rice component to the dextrin component is from about 2:1 to about 3.5:1.

Claim 62 (previously presented): The food coating composition of claim 61, wherein the rice component comprises up to about 30% by weight of the solids content of the composition.

Claim 63 (previously presented): The food coating composition of claim 62 which further comprises potato starch.

Claim 64 (previously presented): The food coating composition of claim 63, wherein the potato starch is a modified ungelatinized low-amylose content potato starch.

Claim 65 (previously presented): The food coating composition of claim 64 further comprising at least about 1% of at least one leavening agent.

Applicants : Cheree L.B. Stevens et al.

Appln. No. : 09/778,470

Page 4

Claim 66 (previously presented): The food coating composition of claim 65 further comprising at least about 0.1 % of at least one stabilizing agent.

Claim 67 (previously presented): The food coating composition of claim 66, wherein the stabilizing agent comprises methylcellulose.

Claim 68 (previously presented): The food coating composition of claim 66, wherein the stabilizing agent comprises xanthan gum.

Claim 69 (previously presented): The food coating composition of claim 66 further comprising at least about 0.1 % of at least one color agent component.

Claim 70 (previously presented): The food coating composition of claim 69, wherein the color agent component comprises a color agent component selected from the group consisting of corn syrup solids, sucrose, whey, derivatives thereof, and combinations thereof.

Claim 71 (previously presented): The food coating composition of claim 66 further comprising at least about 1 % of a salt component or derivative thereof.

Claim 72 (previously presented): The food coating composition of claim 64, wherein the dextrin component comprises up to about 30% by weight of the solid contents of the composition.

Claim 73 (previously presented): The food coating composition of claim 49, wherein the rice component comprises a rice component selected from the group consisting of a short-grain rice flour component, a medium-grain rice flour component, a long-grain rice flour component, and mixtures thereof.

Applicants : Cheree L.B. Stevens et al.

Appln. No. : 09/778,470

Page 5

Claim 74 (previously presented): The food coating composition of claim 73, wherein the dextrin component comprises a dextrin component selected from the group consisting of corn dextrin, tapioca dextrin, potato dextrin, derivatives thereof, and mixtures thereof.

Claim 75 (previously presented): The food coating composition of claim 73, wherein the dextrin component comprises corn dextrin.

Claim 76 (previously presented): The food coating composition of claim 74, wherein the dextrin component comprises a high-solubility dextrin.

Claim 77 (currently amended): The food coating composition of claim 74, wherein the dextrin component comprises a low-solubility dextrin.

Claim 78 (previously presented): The food coating composition of claim 49, wherein the composition further comprises an adherent.

Claim 79 (previously presented): The food coating composition of claim 78, wherein the adherent comprises a potato starch component.

Claim 80 (previously presented): The food coating composition of claim 79, wherein the potato starch component comprises a modified ungelatinized low-amylose content potato starch.

Claim 81 (previously presented): The food coating composition of claim 79, wherein the potato starch component comprises up to about 50% by weight of the composition.

Claim 82 (cancelled)

Applicants : Cheree L.B. Stevens et al.

Appln. No. : 09/778,470

Page 6

Claim 83 (previously presented): The food coating composition of claim 49 further comprising at least about 1 % of at least one leavening agent.

Claim 84 (previously presented): The food coating composition of claim 83, wherein the leavening agent comprises a leavening agent selected from the group consisting of an edible acid, an edible carbonate, derivatives thereof, and combinations thereof.

Claim 85 (previously presented): The food coating composition of claim 83, wherein the leavening agent comprises a combination of sodium acid pyrophosphate and sodium bicarbonate.

Claim 86 (previously presented): The food coating composition of claim 83 further comprising at least about 1 % of at least one sweetening ingredient component.

Claim 87 (previously presented): The food coating composition of claim 86, wherein the sweetening ingredient component comprises sugar.

Claim 88 (previously presented): The food coating composition of claim 49 further comprising at least about 0.1 % of at least one stabilizing agent.

Claim 89 (previously presented): The food coating composition of claim 88, wherein the stabilizing agent comprises a stabilizing agent selected from the group consisting of a cellulose ether, a natural gum, an alginate, a polyalcohol, a water-soluble polymer, derivatives thereof, and combinations thereof.

Claim 90 (previously presented): The food coating composition of claim 49 further comprising a quantity of water mixed with the composition to form a slurry.

Claim 91 (previously presented): The food coating composition of claim 90, wherein the total slurry composition comprises about 30% to about 50% of dry coating composition based upon the total weight of the water and dry-mix components.

Claim 92 (previously presented): A method of providing increased surface crispiness and holding time to a food substrate comprising a step of:

applying a coating composition to the food substrate prior to finish cooking the food substrate, wherein the coating composition comprises from about 25% to about 70% by weight of the combination of a rice component and a dextrin component in ratio rice component to dextrin component from about 1:2 to about 5:1, said coating composition being free of corn starch.

Claim 93 (previously presented): The method of claim 92 further comprising the steps of combining the coating composition with a sufficient quantity of water to form a slurry, and applying the slurry to the food substrate.

Claim 94 (previously presented): The method of claim 93 further comprising the steps of pre-cooking and freezing the food substrate after coating the food substrate with the coating composition, and subsequently reconstituting the pre-cooked, coated, and frozen food substrate by using at least one of a gradient heat source, microwave, or fryer.

Claim 95 (previously presented): The method of claim 94 further comprising the step of conditioning the food substrate by contacting it with a predetermined liquid prior to coating it with the composition.

Claim 96 (previously presented): The method of claim 92, wherein the coating composition comprises up to about 30% by weight rice component of the solids content of the composition and the rice component comprises a rice flour selected from the group consisting of a short-

grain rice flour component, a medium-grain rice flour component, a long-grain rice flour component, derivatives thereof, and combinations thereof.

Claim 97 (previously presented): The method of claim 96, wherein the coating composition comprises a dextrin component wherein the dextrin component comprises up to about 30% by weight of the solids content of the coating composition and the dextrin component comprises a dextrin component selected from the group consisting of a corn dextrin, a tapioca dextrin, a potato dextrin, derivatives thereof, and combinations thereof.

Claim 98 (previously presented): The method of claim 96, wherein the dextrin is a corn dextrin.

Claim 99 (previously presented): The method of claim 97, wherein the food coating composition further comprises a modified ungelatinized potato starch, wherein the ungelatinized potato starch comprises up to about 50% by weight of the solids content of the composition.

Claim 100 (previously presented): The method of claim 99, wherein the coating composition further comprises at least about 1% of at least one leavening agent, at least about 1% of at least one sweetening component, at least about 1% of at least one salt component, at least about 0.1% of at least one stabilizing agent component, and at least about 0.1% of at least one color agent component.

Claim 101 (previously presented): The method of claim 92, wherein the coating composition is applied to the food substrate as a dry mix of ingredients.

Claim 102 (previously presented): The method of claim 101 further comprising the step of freezing the dry-mix coated food substrates without first parfrying them.

Applicants : Cheree L.B. Stevens et al.

Appln. No. : 09/778,470

Page 9

Claim 103 (previously presented): The method of claim 102 further comprising the step of finish cooking the coated food substrates after the food substrates have been frozen without parfrying.

Claim 104 (previously presented): The method of claim 102 further comprising the steps of cooking the coated food substrates after they have been frozen, holding the cooked coated food substrates for up to about 45 minutes, and then re-heating the held food substrates to serving temperature for consumption.

Claim 105 (previously presented): The method of claim 104, wherein the holding step is carried out at room temperature.

Claim 106 (previously presented): The method of claim 104, wherein the holding step is carried out under a heat source.

Claim 107 (previously presented): The method of claim 101, wherein the coated food substrates are finish-cooked after coating and without freezing.

Claim 108 (previously presented): The method of claim 107 further comprising the steps of holding the cooked coated food substrates for up to about 45 minutes and re-heating the held food substrates to serving temperature for consumption.

Claim 109 (previously presented): The method of claim 108, wherein the holding step is carried out at room temperature.

Claim 110 (previously presented): The method of claim 108, wherein the holding step is carried out under a heat source.

Applicants : Cheree L.B. Stevens et al.

Appln. No. : 09/778,470

Page 10

Claim 111 (previously presented): A method of providing increased surface crispiness to a food substrate comprising the steps of:

providing an at least partially cooked potato substrate and a coating composition comprising of a combination of a rice component and a dextrin component wherein the composition is free of corn starch;

adding a sufficient amount of a water to the food coating composition to form a water-dispersible slurry;

applying the water-dispersible slurry to the potato substrate; and

cooking the potato substrate,

thereby providing a potato substrate having increased crispiness and holding time as compared to an uncoated, cooked potato substrate.

Claims 112-124 (cancelled)